

ADEM UPDATE

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NPDES Program to Remain Under ADEM Authority

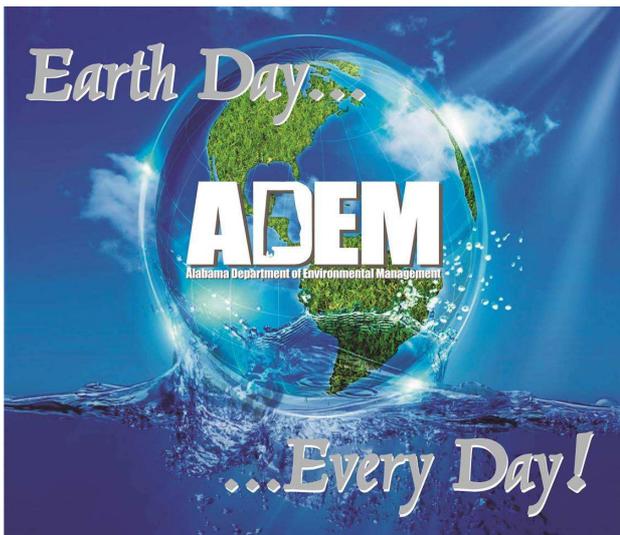
Earlier this year, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency denied three long-running petitions filed under the Clean Water Act. In January, EPA notified ADEM that it had resolved the issues raised in the petitions to withdraw Alabama's National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System program authority.

According to EPA's Final Response to the petitions, EPA "reaffirmed" its determinations with respect to all issues addressed in the previously-issued Interim Response, and also made a final determination on the issues deferred, concluding that "the issues raised in the petitions do not warrant the initiation of withdrawal proceedings."

EPA emphasized that "[w]ithdrawal proceedings are a substantial and impactful government action and EPA would not lightly disrupt Congress' intent that the States take on a significant role in NPDES implementation." EPA chose instead to proceed under its regular oversight.

At the February meeting of the Alabama Environmental Management Commission, ADEM Director Lance LeFleur announced EPA's favorable decision, noting that in reaching its decision, "EPA documents the exhaustive analysis of each of the alleged reasons for withdrawal." He added that the lengthy process "has involved significant expenditure of the Department's resources," and EPA's denial "will allow these resources to be redirected to more productive uses."

ADEM's Earth Day 2017



On April 20, the Alabama Department of Environmental Management hosted students for its Annual Earth Day observance with educational displays and events from 9 a.m. until 1 p.m.

ADEM also celebrated Earth Day 2017 in Brundidge by holding a special event for more than 200 middle and high school students.

On Thursday, April 13, students at four schools met at Pike County High School to learn about environmental programs that are implemented on a daily basis to protect and preserve Alabama's air, land, and water resources.

The students received information and hands-on demonstrations from ADEM staff related to a wide-

range of environmental programs including fish tissue monitoring, water quality sampling, air monitoring, recycling, solid waste disposal, and efforts that ensure Alabamians are provided with clean, safe drinking water. Students also learned about career opportunities at ADEM and were encouraged to pursue careers in science-related fields.

The Earth Day event in Brundidge began at 9 a.m. and ended at 2 p.m.

ADEM Recognizes 40th Anniversary of RCRA

The Alabama Department of Environmental Management is recognizing the 40th Anniversary of the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act this year. RCRA is the primary law governing the disposal of solid and hazardous waste.

In 1976, President Gerald Ford signed RCRA in order to address the increasing problems the U.S. faced from the growing volume of municipal and industrial waste. Over the past 40 years, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and countless others have worked together to protect the health of communities by promoting resource conservation and implementing safe waste management practices.

In 1983, ADEM signed a cooperative agreement with EPA to perform comprehensive environmental response, compensation, and liability assessments in Alabama, and began issuing Hazardous Waste Operating Permits. Four years later, in 1987, ADEM became authorized under RCRA to manage hazardous wastes in Alabama in lieu of EPA. RCRA sets goals to protect human health and the environment from the potential hazards of waste disposal; to conserve energy and natural resources; to reduce the amount of waste generated; and to ensure that wastes are managed in an environmentally sound manner.

ADEM Director Lance LeFleur presented a report on Alabama's efforts and achievements under RCRA to the Alabama Environmental Management Commission in February.



ADEM's February lobby display recognized 40 years of RCRA

ADEM Reaches Out to Seniors at Crump Center



ADEM employees visited Montgomery's Crump Center in March

to explain the services provided by the Department and to encourage environmental awareness.

Educating Alabamians of all ages provides benefits and helps keep the lines of communication open between ADEM and the citizens that the Department strives to protect.

The Crump Center is a fully accessible facility offering programs designed specifically for senior adults to serve their social welfare needs. It's a place where seniors can meet, eat, exercise, and socialize with their peers and stay involved in community and statewide activities and current events.

Community based outreach, education, and engagement with the general public is essential to the overall mission of the Alabama Department of Environmental Management.

ADEM and its employees invest a significant amount of time and resources to meeting with and speaking to community-based organizations. The goal to educate Alabama residents of all ages on ADEM's mission and the importance of safeguarding the State's air, land, and water resources is essential from an environmental standpoint and also from an economic perspective.

The Department receives and fulfills many opportunities for community engagement with the public. On March 7 and 29, ADEM employees met with senior citizens at the Crump Center in Montgomery

Nonpoint Source Program Holds Stakeholder Meetings

During 2017, ADEM's Nonpoint Source (NPS) Management Program is sharpening its focus with a series of meetings with individual river basin groups around the state. The meetings are designed to showcase the NPS Program to new partners, to build and strengthen existing partnerships, and to help identify the issues being faced in watershed restoration efforts.

The Department's NPS Program began these new meetings with a Cooperators' Meeting on January 25 at ADEM's main hearing room in Montgomery. This meeting included stakeholders who currently hold a Section 319 grant contract with the Department targeting nonpoint sources of pollution to streams and rivers identified as impaired.

On February 22 and 23, a pair of workshops were held in Birmingham with stakeholders from the Cahaba and Black Warrior River Basins. These sessions drew more than 55 attendees who learned about how to become an integral part of the Clean Water Act Section 319 Grant Program, aimed at improving water quality by reducing pollutant loads in surface runoff. The sessions provided for open dialogue regarding urban and agricultural NPS issues, the development and implementation of watershed-based plans, and protecting rivers and streams.

The workshops across the state are being held in lieu of ADEM's annual NPS Conference. ADEM staff is gathering data from stakeholders on how to identify and replicate successful practices, leverage resources, measure results, and build partnerships so they can be incorporated into a strengthened stakeholder involvement with the NPS Management Program in each of these basins. The next NPS Program Conference to be hosted by the Department is scheduled for 2018.



In February, two workshops in Birmingham were well attended by stakeholders from the Cahaba and Black Warrior River Basins

Financial Assurance Deemed Complete by EPA



The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has determined that Alabama's financial assurance application contains all of the required elements specified in its regulations, and has been deemed administratively complete.

Therefore, EPA will proceed with its adequacy determination and proceed to public comment in the Federal Register.

On March 2, the Alabama Department of Environmental Management received a letter from EPA - Region 4 informing ADEM of the news regarding the financial assurance program approval application. In the

letter, V. Anne Heard, Action Region 4 Administrator states, "We appreciate the work of your staff to prepare the application and to coordinate with this office for review."

Under ADEM regulations regarding Municipal Solid Waste Landfills, the owner of a solid waste landfill must establish financial assurance to cover the costs associated with closing the landfill, and providing funding for environmental protection during and after closure. The financial assurance under Alabama and federal regulations require for funding sufficient to close and cap the site and perform care and maintenance for 30 years after closure.

ADEM UPDATE Available Online

The Alabama Department of Environmental Management publishes the *ADEM UPDATE* quarterly to inform Alabamians on the latest news and activities of the Department. As a cost-savings measure, the *ADEM UPDATE* is no longer printed. It is distributed electronically and available online through the publications link on the ADEM website at adem.alabama.gov.



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